

November 17, 2002

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

To whom it may concern:

I am outraged and disappointed with the FCC's attempt to diminish the scope of Indiana's Telephone Privacy law. As a citizen of the state of Indiana, I applauded the state's action to protect the privacy and welfare of its residents. Unnecessary telemarketing calls had become an increasing annoyance in not only my life, but the lives of my friends, colleagues and neighbors. Before Indiana implemented its telephone privacy law, I had to erase on average more than 65 calls from my caller ID unit a week. After talking with others, I found that 65 telemarketing calls a week was not atypical. And, I also came to realize that everyone else was just as disgusted with the unwanted calls as I was. So, when the State of Indiana proposed its legislation, I gleefully affixed my name to the "no call list" and I was not alone. My office colleagues, my friends and my relatives all *voluntarily* requested their names be added to the "no call list."

When the telephone privacy law took effect, it was incredible! Finally, the phone stopped ringing at all hours of the day and evening. No more sales calls while I was getting ready for work at 7:00 am. Finally, I could relax and decompress after a hard day's work without having to literally argue with some stranger that I did not want the service or product they were offering me. That's not to say, that I don't still receive telemarketing calls, but now it is far easier to deal with them than it was before. I still refuse to buy anything or enroll in anything over the phone and I still have to half-argue with some of the pushier telemarketers, but the lower volume of calls does make it less disturbing to deal with.

Now, I hear the FCC wishes to lower the restrictions with a new national standard which would usurp Indiana's power to protect its citizens and I have to ask why? Why is the FCC trying to take away this protection from citizens who voluntarily requested that telemarketers stop interfering in their day-to-day lives? This isn't legislation that prohibited companies from doing business with those interested in their products and services. The people of Indiana who put their names on the "no call list" are *not* interested in receiving sales pitches from these companies. Why would telemarketers want to be able to call those not interested in their services or products? Many telemarketers like to prey on the politeness of consumers who do not like to hang up on people, even telemarketers. I am all too aware of this. When telemarketing was in its early stages, before it became so intrusive and obnoxious, I would listen to the sales pitch

and then try to politely end the call. Oftentimes, this would take two, three, four, or more attempts, leaving me irritated and annoyed by the time the call was through. There were even a few instances when I finally said yes only to get them off the phone. One credit card I have is due to the telemarketer being so pushy that I couldn't get him off the line. And have I ever used that credit card? No! And I never will use the card. All I can say is that If the FCC does weaken the Indiana Telephone Privacy law, I will not be polite anymore. I will screen all my calls and I will hang-up when I do answer in error.

The Indiana Telephone Privacy law is protecting Indiana residents from harassing telemarketing calls. This is especially beneficial to the elderly of the state who are often taken advantage of by not only con artists, but also by legitimate telemarketers who are too zealous in their work. By diminishing the number of telemarketing calls received, the state has somewhat restored a sense of privacy to its residents. And after the excellent results that Indiana's legislation has achieved, people will be even less inclined to deal with telemarketers than ever before. Relaxing restrictions on telemarketers will only infuriate a large group of people who are already disgusted with the practice of telemarketing. How can the FCC believe that this would be beneficial to both the businesses and consumers involved? Therefore, I ask that the FCC re-consider its position on introducing a national standard that would weaken Indiana's current legislation.

Sincerely,
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